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California's Energy Interests Protected in Federal Energy Corridors

Draft map released to solicit public input

Sacramento - A federal draft map identifying potential energy corridors that will represent California's energy interests and land use concerns was released for public comment today. The draft map shows corridors for California primarily utilizing existing rights-of-way across federal land.

"This is a preliminary part of the process that preserves California's environmental and energy priorities, and thanks to our active involvement the state isn't left out," said Resources Agency Undersecretary for Energy Affairs Joe Desmond. "Electricity reliability is a huge concern for the people of California, but so is protecting the state's wild lands and open space. We're pleased our federal partners have committed to work with us so the interests of our state are represented."

The Resources Agency and the California Energy Commission worked with a team of federal and state agencies to ensure the state's land use concerns were considered in the development of the West-wide Energy Corridor Plan. The Energy Commission provided to the federal government information on the potential impacts corridor proposals could have on California's landscape, including affects on sensitive species, recreational resources, cultural and historical resources, wild and scenic areas, and compatibility with conservation plans.

The map is a working draft for the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) that will evaluate environmental and land use concerns in the 11 western states. The Draft PEIS is expected to be released later this year. The West-wide Energy Corridor Plan is part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that requires the U.S. Department of Energy, Bureau of Land Management, and Forest Service to designate new right-of-way corridors on federal lands.

The California Energy Commission's 2005 Energy Policy Report recommends that the state establish a corridor planning process for California that would correspond to the corridors proposed by the federal government.

The draft map is available for public comment until July 10, 2006. The map and additional information about West-wide Energy Corridor PEIS will be available at: <http://corridoreis.anl.gov>.

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